



## Office of Management's Monthly Newsletter

# The Beacon

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Food Safety and Inspection Service  
Office of Management  
Ronald Hicks, Deputy Administrator

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**bea-con** (bê ' ken) *noun*

A signaling or guiding device, such as a lighthouse, located on a coast. A source of guidance or

### RON'S CORNER

#### **Billy Elected Chair of Codex**

*by Ron Hicks  
Deputy Administrator  
Office of Management  
Telephone: 202-720-4425*

Tom Billy, Administrator of FSIS was elected Chair of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during its meeting in Rome, Italy, June 28-July 3, 1999. Prior to his election, Mr. Billy has served as vice chairman of the Codex Commission for two years. He has also served as national coordinator for Codex and U.S. delegate to the Codex Commission. While in his new position, Mr. Billy will continue to serve as FSIS Administrator.

Agriculture Secretary Glickman applauded the Administrator's election: "Tom Billy's election to this important international position is a great honor for the United States and the Department of Agriculture. As chairman of Codex, he will help lead global efforts to build on recent U.S. food safety gains."

The Codex Alimentarius Commission was established in 1962 and is the major international organization responsible for protecting the health and economic interests of consumers, developing international food standards, and encouraging fair international trade in food. Codex is the joint food

standards program of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) of the United Nations. The Commission is comprised of members from 165 member nations--which represent 98 percent of the world's population.

### AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEMS

#### **Hackers Attack USDA**

*by Robert Harmon  
Automated Information Systems  
Division  
Telephone: 202-720-4016*

In June, hackers defaced FSIS and three other USDA web servers. USDA is not alone. Hackers have disabled computers at the Army, Energy, Interior, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Senate, and the White House this year. A hacker is someone who intrudes into your computer's infrastructure without authorization. The damage can range in severity. The Automated Information Systems Division's (AISD) quick response to the incident minimized downtime and embarrassment to the Agency.

Due to the recent attacks on government web sites, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) asked agencies to review their security practices and policies and report back to OMB within 90 days. USDA's Office of the Chief

Information Officer (OCIO) has established an Information Security Sub-Council (ISSC). The ISSC is tasked with determining the requirements for security in the Department and recommendations for deployment. In the interim, OCIO will implement an information technology centralized incident reporting and information relay unit that is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

How does this attack affect you?

Almost all of the computers in headquarters are connected to the Internet, which makes it very easy for hackers to infiltrate our network. Anyone who downloads a program from the Internet can increase our vulnerability. One example of the "weapons" used by hackers is ICQ, which is the acronym for "I Seek You". It's an Internet chat program that allows another Internet user to privately chat with you. Last year, there were eight reported cases of hackers giving ICQ users trojan horses (malicious code) that allowed them access to the unenlightened user's computer. FSIS employees can get this code from web sites and

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even e-mail.

What can be done to prevent this from happening to you?

- Install Command Anti-virus at work and home. This is especially important for employees in the work at home pilot. However, *not all* trojan horses can be detected by anti-virus software.
- Minimize the number of documents and programs you download from e-mail and the Internet. This should include screensavers.
- Change the default USDAFSIS domain password. Your E-mail Coordinator gives this password to you. Information is available on Outlook in Public Folders under Microcomputer Support in E-mail Tips.
- Disable Window 95's file and print sharing service. If file permissions are incorrectly set, you open the entire USDAFSIS domain to the Internet.

## TRAVEL

### Taxation of Federal Travel Reimbursements

by Barbara McNiff

Budget Division

Telephone: 202-720-3061

In the December 1998 issue of *The Beacon*, we advised you of a dispute between the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) over whether travel reimbursement for travel greater than 12 hours, but less than 24 was taxable. In April 1999, the IRS issued a memorandum stating that such travel was taxable and that special treatment could not be given to Federal employees to exempt them from this tax.

The National Finance Center (NFC) will have to modify their travel system to report this type of travel

reimbursement as taxable income, however, we have no word of when that will be done. In the meantime, employees may want to keep their own records pertaining to such reimbursements for tax purposes.

### Mileage Minute

When a relief inspector travels to a temporary duty (TDY) site involving overnight travel, the inspector is reimbursed for all mileage, including mileage between the lodging establishment and the plants. However, if a relief inspector is assigned to a patrol assignment, to which he or she can commute from their residence, then, depending on the nature of the assignment, the inspector may not be entitled to all mileage incurred.

Directive 3800.2 states that "A relief assignment is considered the employee's regular assignment for purposes of applying the mileage reimbursement policy." Therefore, if the relief assignment is one in which the employee has to report to the primary duty location (PDL) first every morning, then the employee would not be reimbursed for the mileage between the employee's residence and the PDL.

We have been advised that there continues to be confusion regarding the application of the mileage reimbursement policy. If you have any questions pertaining to this policy, please submit them and we will answer them in *The Beacon*. This will help to ensure that the policy is applied uniformly throughout the Agency.

### VISA Travel Charge Card

by Sue Ayers

Budget Division

Telephone: 202-720-5068

Employees designated by their Program/ District/Office to participate in NationsBank's Automated Teller Machine (ATM)

Program should now have received their personal identification numbers (PIN's) for obtaining cash advances for official travel. Currently, Federal employees have a choice of obtaining official travel advances *either from an ATM or from NFC*. But, before the year ends, that choice may no longer exist. It may become mandatory that all Federal employees obtain travel advance funds from an ATM.

The Agency strongly encourages employees to begin obtaining travel advances from an ATM, as opposed to NFC. Using an ATM is using the Contractor's money--not the Agency's. It is also more efficient, quicker, and requires less paperwork.

Employees with questions regarding the PIN's, the ATM Program, or the VISA travel card may contact their District Office's Resource Management Specialist or their Administrative Staff office. Each of those offices has an assigned staff member who can assist them on NationsBank issues, as well as provide copies of several documents on the Agency's policy on the Government-issued charge card and the ATM Program.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Human Resources Field Office Contacts

by Marlin Waller

Human Resources Division

Telephone: 202-720-4827

In last month's issue we told you about the newly restructured Human Resources Field Office (HRFO--formerly the Personnel Operations Branch). The Minneapolis location of the Human Resources Division is now organized into two branches--the Benefits and Field Classification and Compensation Branch (headed by Jim Duoos) and the Field Employment Services Branch

(headed by Karen Benham). If field employees do not know which branch to call for an answer to their questions, simply continue to contact the Human Resources Field Office in Minneapolis on the central phone numbers 1-800-370-3747 or 612-370-2000 and their calls will be referred to the appropriate branch. Callers who know the extension of the individual they are trying to reach can reach the individual directly by entering the extension after dialing the toll free number above or by dialing 612-370-2010.

### June/July Retirements

Dennis H. Bittler, Compliance Offcr, OFO, Philadelphia, PA, 07/03/99, 26 Years  
Peggy H. Davis, FI, OFO, Detroit, MI, 07/03/99, 23 Years  
Bobby D. Duffey, FI, OFO, Batavia, OH, 07/31/99, 15 Years  
Judy L. Ellenburg, FI, OFO, Ashland, AL, 06/19/99, 6 Years  
Ronald C. Farrell, SVMO, OFO, Wyalusing, PA, 07/03/99, 10 Years  
Mickey Fenn, FI, OFO, Trenton, NJ, 07/02/99, 31 Years  
Steven S. Goldman, FI, OFO, Lake Worth, FL, 06/30/99, 25 Years  
James D. Hagar, FI, OFO, Jay, OK, 07/02/99, 34 Years,  
Thomas G. Handel, FI, OFO, Madison, WI, 07/03/99, 46 Years  
Thomas E. Hooten, VMO, OFO, Shinnston, WV, 06/30/99, 7 Years  
Phillip K. Hoover, FI, OFO, Wilkesboro, NC, 07/03/99, 37 Years  
John W. Horton, FI, OFO, Carthage, MS, 06/30/99, 30 Years  
James L. Lane, FI, OFO, Geneseo, IL, 07/03/99, 21 Years  
Wilma F. Larson, FI, OFO, Willmar, MN, 06/30/99, 14 Years  
E. Tim Leonard, Personnel Offcr, OM, Minneapolis, MN, 06/30/99, 33 Years  
Wallace J. Manning, Labor Relations Spec, OM, Alameda, CA, 07/09/99, 25 Years  
Kenneth L. Matlock, FI, OFO, Springdale, AR, 07/03/99, 31 Years

Maxine L. Nelson, FI, OFO, Geneseo, IL, 07/10/99, 14 Years  
Robert W. Omlin, FI, OFO, Detroit, MI, 07/02/99, 37 Years  
JoAnn Payne, FI, OFO, Dardanelle, AR, 06/19/99, 22 Years  
George E. Pounds, FI, OFO, Boaz, AL, 06/19/99, 29 Years  
William C. Peoples, FI, OFO, Jackson, MS, 07/03/99, 40 Years  
Mildred L. Pierce, FI, OFO, Wilkesboro, NC, 07/03/99, 9 Years  
Miriam E. Ross, Financial Tech, OM, Urbandale, IA, 06/19/99, 8 Years  
Richard L. Sorenson, FI, OFO, Portland, OR, 07/03/99, 27 Years  
Kenneth R. Sparks, FI, OFO, Mt. Pleasant, TX, 06/30/99, 8 Years  
George C. Undine, FI, OFO, Washington, MO, 07/03/99, 31 Years  
Matt Vann, Jr., FI, OFO, Rose Hill, NC, 07/03/99, 32 Years

### Leave Transfer Recipients

1. Martha Stamps  
OFO, AR; Serious Illness
2. Jackie Copeland  
OFO, DC; Illness
3. Mary Ann Riley  
OPPDE, DC; Illness
4. Esther Reed  
OFO, CA; Illness
5. Annie Stewart  
OM, MN; Serious Illness
6. Kasturi Basu  
OFO, DC; Surgery
7. John Roderick  
OFO, MA; Surgery
8. Linda Cole  
OPPDE, DC; Serious Illness
9. Sonya West  
OPPDE, DC; Maternity
10. Mary Burdick  
OFO, PA; Complications w/pregnancy
11. Joyce Schultz  
OM, MN; Serious Illness
12. FO-98-0031\*  
OFO, AR; Serious Illness
13. Michelle Jacobson  
OM, MN; Maternity
14. Stephanie Showell  
OFO, DE; Family Illness

15. Jerry Long  
OFO, TN; Illness
16. Michael Schwochert  
OFO, CO; Surgery
17. FO-98-0042\*  
OFO, DC; Surgery
18. Willia Stepney  
OM, DC; Maternity
19. Michelle Carpenter  
OFO, OH; Complications w/pregnancy
20. Linda Carey  
EMS, DC; Surgery
21. FO-99-0003\*  
OFO, AR; Serious Illness
22. Gary Fetters  
OFO, IA; Serious Illness
23. Nancy Clyburn  
OPHS, DC; Surgery
24. FO-99-0007\*  
OFO, SC; Serious Illness
25. George Olson  
OFO, MN; Family Illness
26. Kellie Upshaw  
EMS, DC; Maternity
27. Traci Edmond  
EMS, DC; Maternity
28. Yolanda Locus  
OPPDE, DC; Family Illness
29. Mary Sutton  
OPHS, GA; Complications w/pregnancy
30. FO-99-0010\*  
OFO, NC; Surgery
31. Cheryl Evans  
OFO, AR; Surgery
32. Diana Nolan  
OFO, NY; Serious Illness
33. Richard Parmenter  
OFO, GA; Surgery
34. Octavia Thomas  
OFO, GA; Complications w/pregnancy
35. Mose Tyler  
OFO, CA; Surgery
36. Cynthia Dixon  
OM, DC; Illness
37. George Touns  
FO, LA; Serious Illness
38. FO-99-0017\*  
FO, OH; Surgery
39. Marilyn Weber  
FPC, IA; Illness
40. Robert Martz  
FO, IA; Serious Illness
41. Alma Lindsey

- FO, IL; Illness  
 42. Joseph Banales  
 OFO, CA; Illness  
 43. Lorraine Kauffman  
 OM, DC; Maternity  
 44. Charles Olson  
 OFO, WI; Serious Illness  
 45. Betty Morgan  
 OFO, AR; Family Illness  
 46. Amilcar Lopez  
 OFO, AL; Serious Illness  
 47. Carolyn Woolfolk  
 OFO, DC; Surgery  
 48. Donna Ogdahl  
 OFO, MN; Surgery  
 49. Dorothy Fanick  
 OFO, TX, Serious Illness  
 50. Kimberly Bauman  
 OFO, IL; Surgery  
 51. OFO-99-0027  
 FO, NC, Surgery  
 52. Julie Escobar  
 OFO, DC; Family Illness  
 53. Carol Leonard  
 OM, IA; Serious Illness  
 54. Theresa Spoering  
 OFO, MN; Surgery

\*While not consenting to the publication of their names, certain LTP recipients are assigned a number that they may provide to their co-workers if they choose so that donated leave may be transferred to their account. Any questions on the LTP should be referred to the Human Resources Field Office on 1-800-370-3747 for field employees and to the Classification and Compensation Branch for HQ employees on 202-720-6287.

## SUPPLIES

### New Items

by Pete Bridgeman  
 Administrative Services Division  
 Telephone: 301-504-4222

*Probe Wipes for Sterilizing Pocket Thermometers (FSIS-62):* Darryl G. Elrod, Food Inspector from Fisherville, KY, sent in the following idea: "One of the problems we have

as inspectors is how to clean and sanitize the probe on the thermometer after each use. My suggestion is for your office to furnish all inspectors with thermometer probe wipes that contain 70 % isopropyl alcohol. This should stop any cross-contamination from using a thermometer that has not been properly cleaned. I am enclosing a picture of this type of product". Thanks for the great suggestion, Darryl! We looked into it, and agreed that this would be a useful item to supply out of Landover, and were able to add it right into our inventory. These wipes are now available, from the Specialty Item side (Add to your *green section of catalog*), and can be ordered using Item # FSIS-62, "Probe Wipes". The Unit of Issue is Box, each box containing 200 individually wrapped probe wipes. These comply with Food Code Sanitation requirements and come in foil packets designed to keep fingers away from the cleaning pad.

*Ultra-Fit Reusable Ear Plugs with Cord (FSIS-63):* Harry E. Springfield, Jr., Field Safety and Occupational Health Specialist, Administrative Services Division, Philadelphia, PA, brought to our attention a different style of ear plug than the ones we have available in Landover. It is a triple flange, soft, flexible polymer style plug with cord that can be washed for reuse. This plug has a Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) of 21 dB, and fits ears of all sizes. We think it's important to provide a wide variety of types and styles of hearing protection, and so we've added this item to the inventory in Landover. The Item Number to order this style of ear plug is FSIS-63, "Ultra-Fit Reusable Ear Plugs W/Cord", the Unit of Issue is Pair, and is available from the Specialty Items side (add to *green section of your catalog*).

### Supplies and Y2K

We've been asked if there is anything to be concerned about in terms of getting supplies from Landover in January 2000. We don't subscribe to the "Sky Is Falling" theories that abound about Y2K, but we are taking a common sense approach to any potential "real" problems that could arise, and we encourage everyone to do the same. We look upon these potential problems not as something to fear, but rather as a challenge to meet and overcome.

Will there be enough stock on hand? Most of our vendors have assured us that they are Y2K ready. For each Specialty Item that we stock, we have, on the average, 6 different vendors from whom we can obtain the item within a competitive price range. We will build up our inventory of key Specialty Items, just to be on the safe side.

What about Landover's Electronic Order Processing and Inventory Systems? These have recently been upgraded, tested and certified to be Y2K compliant by an independent contractor, so we don't expect any systemic problems there. If the system still experienced some unforeseen problems, we would be prepared to fill orders the old fashioned way, manually, until the problem got fixed.

What about getting the supplies delivered to the field from Landover? The primary carrier we utilize to deliver supplies to the field from Landover is UPS. UPS assures us that they are ready for Y2K. If UPS still experienced any difficulties, we have a number of other options as alternatives for delivering your supplies to you, such as the U.S. Postal Service, or a number of other common carriers. Things could take a little longer to

get to you, but we would get them there.

As in most situations, the key to weathering any potential Y2K "storms" is to plan ahead and be prepared. The period from December through February is typically our busiest time of year for filling orders from the field. One thing you can do to play your part in Y2K planning is to place orders in September, October, and early November for items you project you'll need in early January. This is always a good idea, anyway, to avoid that end of the year "crunch". Things like next year's Canadian Export Certificates, FSIS 9135-3, should be available by October of this year. Year 2000 Calendars will be available in September, and we will automatically send a Wall Calendar out to every plant (see following article).

We're looking forward to meeting the challenges of Y2K with confidence and assurance, and will continue to do all that we can to be prepared. Bring on the new millenium!

### Year 2000 Calendars

Like we did last year, we will automatically send a Wall Calendar out to every USDA inspected plant in the country, so you won't have to order these. Look for these to begin arriving in the last week of August and first week of September. The only danger in sending these out early is that you could file it away and forget you have it. We suggest that when these arrive, put them somewhere that you'll remember you have them in December.

We will also be sending wall calendars to every field office, each program office in headquarters, and to each relief inspector who has an account set-up in Landover. All other Year 2000 calendars will be available in Landover by

September. To order a Year 2000 Calendar, you simply put a "0" in front of the number listed in the orange section of your catalog, and that will denote that you want a 2000 calendar. For instance, the Monthly Activity Schedule for year 2000 would be item number "07170". Order your calendars early to beat the end of the year rush! Below is a listing of the Item Numbers for Year 2000 Calendars:

<u>Calender</u>	<u>Item Number</u>
Desktop, daily flipover regular, 3" x 3-5/8"	07137
Desktop, daily flipover executive, 3-5/8" x 5-7/8"	07145
Daily pocket planning set	03962
Monthly activity sched.	07170
Monthly desk blotter pad	07196
Wall calendar, 3-part, Monthly	07161
Weekly appointment book	07188

## ISSUANCES

### Recent Agency Issuances

by Mary Wissman  
Administrative Services Division  
Telephone: 301-504-4233

The following notices and directives have been issued since the July 1999 edition of *The Beacon*. Many recent issuances are available in an electronic format from the "PCDIALS" library in Opdesk and from the "Agency Issuances" public folder in the Exchange mail system (Outlook).

Notice 18-99 (6/21/99)  
Performance Appraisal Checklist and Calendar

Notice 19-99 (6/29/99)  
Revised Date for Electing or Changing FEGLI Coverage

Notice 20-99 (7/13/99)  
Employee Length-of-Service Recognition  
April 1999 Through June 1999

Notice 21-99 (7/23/99)  
Field Operations Merit Award for Excellence Recipients--1998

Notice 22-99 (7/15/99)  
Awards Granted to Food Inspectors for 1998

Directive 3800.1 Revision 2  
Amendment 9 (6/28/99)  
Temporary Duty Travel Within Conus

Directive 4451.10 (6/17/99)  
Field Operations Merit Award Program for Excellence

Directive 10,210.1, Amendment 1 (6/10/99)  
Unified Sampling Form

Directives and notices are distributed automatically to applicable Agency employees and offices. Additional copies are available from:

USDA FSIS ASD P&DS  
MAILDROP 5241  
5601 SUNNYSIDE AVENUE  
BELTSVILLE MD 20705-5241

Tel: 301-504-4242  
Fax: 301-504-4277

*FSIS Checklist 2-99* provides a listing of FSIS issuances and gives instructions for discontinuing issuances for FSIS use. Checklist 2-99 covers the second quarter of calendar year 1999 (April 1 through June 30, 1999). Copies have been printed and distributed to FSIS offices. An electronic version of Checklist 2-99 has been placed in the "Agency Issuances" public folder in the Exchange mail system (Outlook).

## OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

### 1999 Multi-District Safety Poster Contest

by Carol Leonard

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 515-727-8980

The Multi-District Safety and Health Committee for the Chicago, Des Moines, Madison and Pickerington Districts announces this year's Safety Poster Contest and will again focus on ideas for promoting a safe work environment.

#### Safety Poster Contest Procedures:

Entries are to be in black and white, on 8 1/2 x 11 inch plain paper. Entrants must be permanent full-time employees of the Chicago, Des Moines, Madison and Pickerington Districts, Field Operations, FSIS. Entries are limited to one submittal per employee and must be received at the address listed below by close of business October 15, 1999. The employee's name, district, and circuit should appear on the back of the poster.

Send your poster to:

Ms. Carol Leonard  
Field Safety and Health Specialist  
USDA, FSIS, ASD, EHSB  
11338 Aurora Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50322

The Multi-District Safety and Health Committee will select one winning poster from each district. Each winner must be on the roles at the time selections are made and will be presented with an eight hour time-off award and certificate. A copy of their poster will be featured in a later edition of the *Beacon*.

### Eye Injuries

by Tom Wright

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 301-504-4246

Injuries are the leading cause of death and disability through the age of 44 in the United States and the third leading cause of death for all ages, preceded only by heart disease and cancer. Over 150,000 Americans die from injuries each year, the number of non-fatal injuries exceeds this figure by hundreds of times.

There are approximately 2.5 million eye injuries in the United States yearly causing some 40 to 60 thousand cases of permanent visual impairment. The United States Eye Injury Registry was established in 1988, as a result of a profound lack of epidemiological data on all serious eye trauma occurring in the United States. According to the Registry, the sources of eye injuries are as follows:

- Blunt Object 30 %
- Sharp Object 19%
- Nail/Hammer 11%
- Motor Vehicle Crash 8%
- Gun 6%
- BB/Pellet Gun 6%
- Fireworks 5%
- Fall 4%
- Other 11%

FSIS employees are exposed to many hazards that may result in eye injuries. Report such hazards so that corrective actions can be initiated or necessary protective equipment can be provided.

## INTERNAL CONTROLS

### Is FSIS Ready for the President's Quality Award?

by Kris Murthy

Internal Control Staff

Telephone: 202-690-5646

In 1996, FSIS's organizational structure was changed to maximize use of its resources to meet the food

safety and consumer safety protection challenges with science-based tools. The change has led to the implementation of pathogen reduction systems and HACCP regulations. In addition, there were program changes including streamlining of functions, realignment of the workforce, more emphasis on customer service and the development of innovative ways to do more with less resources.

As a result of program changes, FSIS was able to successfully implement the pathogen reduction and HACCP based inspection system, enhance education of consumers about foodborne illness, and upgrade various information systems and make other program improvements.

The Internal Control Staff was created during this period and carries out the management control, audit liaison, personnel misconduct, and investigation functions. We continuously work with FSIS program managers in assessing program risks and vulnerabilities, monitoring and evaluating management controls and providing continuous feedback. The Internal Control Staff serves to assist and objectively inform senior program officials on a variety of issues.

The Internal Control Staff is looking for opportunities to help demonstrate the agency's or specific program effectiveness and efficiency. We are well positioned to see overall Agency accomplishments. As FSIS progresses, the Internal Control Staff is looking for opportunities for the Agency or selected programs to be considered for the President's Quality Award.

What is the President's Quality Award?

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) administers the President's Quality Award Program.

Created in 1988, a high performing Federal organization is selected annually to receive this award. The program:

- Recognizes federal organizations that improve overall performance and capabilities;
- Promotes the best management techniques, strategies and performance practices;
- Provides models for other organizations to assess their overall performance in delivering continuous value to customers; and
- Provides a systematic, disciplined approach to deal with change by providing a framework or tool for conducting assessments, analysis, training and performance improvement planning.

The application process for the award and the feed back received from OPM helps organizations to improve performance, get results and become more responsive to customers. Each year the program establishes its criteria for the award, based on characteristics found among excellent organizations in the world.

When an organization participates in the award program, it will receive an objective review of its performance and valuable feedback. The President's Quality Award Program criteria are the basis for evaluating organizations. The criteria for the year 2000 are built on a set of core values and concepts. They are as follows:

- *Leadership*: Examines an organization's senior leaders role in setting directions and creating a customer orientation, clear and visible values, and high expectations.

- *Strategic Planning*: Evaluates the planning development process, objectives and action, and related human resources, including diversity.
- *Customer Focus*: Reviews all product, service features, and characteristics that contribute values to customers and lead to customer satisfaction.
- *Information and Analysis*: Analyzes an organization's performance measurement system and how performance data and information are evaluated.
- *Human Resource Focus*: Takes a closer look at an organization to enable employees to develop and utilize their full potential, as aligned with the organization's objectives.
- *Process Management*: Assesses the key aspect of an organization's process management, including customer-focused design, product, service delivery, support, and supplies.
- *Business Results*: Compares an organization's performance and improvement in key business areas, market place performance, mission accomplishment and partner results. Performance level relative to competitors is also examined.

The goals of the President's Quality Award Program are not only recognizing excellence in government but providing critical feedback to applicants on their activities. The award program has

proven to be remarkably successful in federal organizations.

Each year, a group of experts review applications for the award, conducting site visits and providing each applicant with extensive feedback citing strengths and opportunities to improve. In addition, OPM members and award recipients have given presentations on quality management and performance improvement.

The Award criteria are used by thousands of organizations of all kinds for self-assessment and training and as a tool to develop performance and business processes. For many organizations, using the criteria results in better employee relations, higher productivity, greater customer satisfaction, increased market share, and improved profitability.

In the past, the Department of Defense, the U. S. Army, the U.S. Navy, the Internal Revenue Service, and the U. S. Air Force have won this Award. An agency, a program, a division or a staff function of a federal organization may apply for this award. The Internal Control Staff is interested in working with FSIS's managers who may have an interest in applying for this award.

**To comment on this newsletter or to submit an article for publication, please contact:**

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